

I Claim:

1. A guidewire advancer for use with a guidewire, comprising:
  - an elongate tube having a first outlet at a first end and a second outlet at a second end;
  - a body member having a proximal portion, a central portion and a distal portion, wherein the proximal portion is connected to the first outlet of the elongate tube; and
  - a roller wheel rotatably connected to the body member adjacent to the central portion thereof, the roller wheel having a top;
  - wherein the proximal portion of the body member defines a passage therein for allowing a guidewire to extend therethrough;
  - wherein the distal portion of the body member defines a passage therein for allowing a guidewire to extend therethrough; and
  - wherein the passage of the proximal portion of the body member is out of alignment with the passage of the distal portion of the body member;
  - wherein the top of the roller wheel is aligned with or slightly above a line connecting a distal end of the passage in the proximal portion and a proximal end of the passage in the distal portion.
2. The guidewire advancer of claim 1 wherein the passage of the proximal portion of the body member is above the passage of the distal portion of the body member.
3. The guidewire advancer of claim 1 wherein the roller wheel defines a circumferential surface that is rough.
4. The guidewire advancer of claim 1 wherein the roller wheel defines a circumferential surface that is rubberized.

5. The guidewire advancer of claim 1 the top of the roller wheel is slightly above the line connecting a distal end of the passage in the proximal portion and a proximal end of the passage in the distal portion such that a guidewire extending from the passage in the proximal portion to the passage in the distal portion is bent.

6. The guidewire advancer of claim 5 wherein the body member includes a slot adapted to hold the guidewire in a coiled position.

7. The guidewire advancer of claim 1 wherein the roller wheel defines an axis about which the roller wheel rotates and wherein the axis of the roller wheel is radially offset from the passage of the proximal portion of the body member.

8. The guidewire advancer of claim 8 wherein the axis of the roller wheel is below the passage of the proximal portion of the body member.

9. The guidewire advancer of claim 9 wherein the circumferential surface of the roller wheel is above the passage of the distal portion of the body member.

10. The guidewire advancer of claim 1 further comprising an end cap covering the second outlet of the elongate tube.

11. A guidewire advancer comprising:  
an elongate tube having a first outlet at a first end and a second outlet at a second end;  
a guidewire slidably disposed within the elongate tube;  
a body member having a proximal portion, a central portion and a distal portion, wherein the proximal portion is connected to the first outlet of the

elongate tube and wherein the central portion is adapted, at its bottom, to receive a finger of a caregiver; and

a roller wheel rotatably connected to the body member at the body member's top such that a top portion of the roller wheel is exposed at the top of the body member;

wherein the proximal portion of the body member defines a proximal passage therein and wherein the guidewire is slidingly disposed within the proximal passage;

wherein the distal portion of the body member defines a distal passage therein and wherein the guidewire is slidingly disposed within the distal passage;

wherein a distal end of the proximal passage is higher than a proximal end of the distal passage;

wherein the roller wheel extends above a line connecting the distal end of the proximal passage and a proximal end of the distal passage; and

wherein the guidewire is disposed, at least in part, along the top portion.

12. The guidewire advancer of claim 11 wherein the proximal passage is radially offset from the distal passage such that the proximal passage is above the distal passage.

13. The guidewire advancer of claim 12 wherein the axis of rotation of the roller wheel is radially offset from the proximal passage such that the axis of rotation of the roller wheel is below the proximal passage.

14. The guidewire advancer of claim 13 wherein the circumferential surface of the roller wheel is above the distal passage.

15. A guidewire advancer comprising:  
an elongate tube having a first outlet at a first end and a second outlet at a second end;  
a guidewire slidingly disposed within the elongate tube;

a body member having a proximal portion, a central portion and a distal portion, wherein the proximal portion is connected to the first outlet of the elongate tube and wherein the central portion is adapted, at its bottom, to receive a finger of a caregiver; and

a roller wheel rotatably connected to the body member at its top such that a portion of the roller wheel is exposed at the top of the body member;

wherein the proximal portion of the body member defines a proximal passage therein and wherein the guidewire is slidingly disposed within the proximal passage;

wherein the distal portion of the body member defines a distal passage therein and wherein the guidewire is slidingly disposed within the distal passage;

wherein a distal end of the proximal passage is higher than a proximal end of the distal passage; and

wherein the roller wheel extends above a line connecting the distal end of the proximal passage and a proximal end of the distal passage;

a slot formed in the body member wherein at least a portion of the elongate tube is disposed in the slot; and

wherein the guidewire disposed proximal to the proximal portion of the body member is disposed entirely within the elongate tube.

16. The guidewire advancer of claim 15 wherein the guidewire is disposed at least in part, along the exposed portion of the roller wheel.